

Words from the President of the Japanese Archaeological Association

It is my great pleasure to present the inaugural issue of *Japanese Journal Archaeology* ('*JJA*') to fellow members of the Japanese Archaeological Association and our colleagues across the world.

JJA, a web-based, open-access journal, is published by the Japanese Archaeological Association, but it is open to non-members: it welcomes contributions from archaeologists across the world.

The Japanese Archaeological Association was founded in 1948. As the largest representative body of archaeologists in Japan and those who are interested in Japanese archaeology, the Association works for the development of scholarship, promoting best practice in the preservation, conservation and public use of cultural heritage, and makes various contributions through archaeology to society.

Archaeology in Japan has developed in tandem with the development of cultural heritage management. Since the 1970s, excavation of archaeological sites threatened by development has become the norm, and high-quality excavations and post-excavation works, and the detailed publication of the outcomes, is a mandatory requirement. As the Japanese economy enjoyed rapid growth, resulting in the development of land across the archipelago, a tremendous amount of material and information have accumulated. The recent development of Japanese archaeology has drawn heavily upon these historically unique conditions, and the Japanese archipelago now has one of the most intensively researched archaeological records in the world with a vast amount of well-published data.

However, the language barrier has prevented the entire picture of archaeological endeavour in Japan from being fully appreciated outside Japan; although pioneering attempts have been made in the form of translating important articles and publishing introductory volumes, the entirety of the enterprise is so vast, that makes it difficult even for Japanese archaeologists to fully grasp the whole picture. It has therefore been very difficult for overseas

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colleagues to fully understand what is really going on.

One of the principal objectives of founding *JJA* is to expose Japanese archaeology to the rest of the world. The publication of individual original works deriving from the particularly favourable circumstances of Japanese archaeology is, I believe, the best way to promote mutual understanding and fruitful and constructive dialogue between Japanese archaeologists and colleagues across the globe. I also hope that once set in motion, the process will lead to an increasing number of overseas colleagues not only becoming interested in, but also actively engaged with the study of Japanese archaeology.

I hope for a lot more besides. As mentioned, *JJA* is open to non-members *and* does not confine its scope to 'Japanese Archaeology'. The importance of continually developing our theories and methods is universal, and outcomes of trials, errors and successes need to be shared worldwide. The importance of comparative studies is ever-growing. Our experiences of engaging with social and communal issues unique in individual countries and regions also need to be shared. I hope that *JJA* will function as an arena of international dialogue, and I believe that it will contribute to the genuine internationalisation of Japanese archaeology.

I am looking forward to seeing articles, reports and dialogue pieces from all over the world published in *JJA*, and I am hopeful that the day will come when Japanese archaeology makes a significant contribution to world archaeology.

I wish to conclude by thanking the Japan Society for the Promotion of Sciences for funding this enterprise, and by thanking you all very much for supporting *JJA*.

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President of Japanese Archaeological Association
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